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DE RUEHML #5101 3620915  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 280915Z DEC 06  
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4404  
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE  
RHHMUNA/CDRUSPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS MANILA 005101

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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [OVIP](#) [RP](#)  
SUBJECT: PHILIPPINES TO SEND VICE PRESIDENT TO FORMER  
PRESIDENT FORD'S FUNERAL

REF: STATE 203066

¶1. (SBU) Action request: The Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed on December 28 that President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo had appointed Vice President Noli de Castro to be the representative of the Philippine Government at the funeral of former President Gerald Ford. The Vice President's office separately contacted Embassy for details in order to coordinate his flight schedule. Embassy provided publicly available information and promised additional details as they become available. Please advise about the policy on and procedures for foreign dignitaries at the funeral and all administrative details for Embassy's use by OOB December 29 Manila time. End action request.

¶2. (U) According to DFA, President Arroyo is also writing to Mrs. Ford to offer her personal condolences. The DFA plans to issue a statement as well, but had not done so by COB December 28. Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Policy Erlinda Basilio represented the Philippine Government in signing the condolence book at the Embassy on December 28, offering condolences on behalf of the Philippine government and the Filipino people on the demise of "a great son of the United States of America and beloved leader of the American people." Basilio noted that the Philippines shared in the great loss. "We pray for the Lord that he will grant the late President Ford eternal life and comfort the members of the Ford family at this difficult time and the American people."

¶3. (U) Senior diplomats from Argentina, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka also paid their respects and signed the condolence book on December 28, with others from Laos, India, France, Israel, Brazil, Chile, Indonesia, Great Britain, Singapore, and Turkey already expected on December 29.

¶4. (U) The former President's death dominated the electronic and print media on December 28, with stories highlighting especially his healing role after President Nixon's resignation.

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